



Muncy Baptist Church Newsletter



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In Luke’s Gospel, the birth of Jesus Christ is closely linked with the birth of John the Baptist. In fact, before the announcement was made to Mary, before the trip to Bethlehem, and before the angels and the shepherds arrived to the scene, Luke began by talking about Zechariah and Elizabeth and the coming of John, who would serve as a forerunner to prepare the way for the coming Messiah. Though our focus during this season is often on the coming King, as it rightfully should be, sometimes we overlook the importance of John to the ministry of Jesus. John was the one who would prepare the way, calling people to turn back to God, and readying their hearts for the Savior.

By its very nature, Advent is a season of preparation. During this season, we are preparing our hearts to celebrate the birth of the Messiah and His second coming; what better way to do so than to look at the life of John the Baptist?

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There are a lot of different aspects of John's life that we could spend time focusing on: his lifestyle, the way he dressed, or the message that he preached to get the people ready for Jesus. But let me draw your attention to one single statement that John made in John 3:30, "He [Jesus] must increase, but I must decrease."

In this single statement, we see the aim of John's life and ministry. His whole purpose in life was to see Jesus increase. It's not about him, it's all about Jesus. Everything he did was with one aim, to lift up and glorify the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. John spent his whole life seeking to serve the Messiah, rejoicing to know that God's plan and purpose were being fulfilled by the coming of Jesus Christ.

There are many ways we prepare for the coming of Christmas. We decorate, we buy presents, we attend special church services, we read certain Scriptures, we sing carols, and we may even use a calendar with chocolate to help us count down. There's nothing wrong with any of those things, not even the ones that don't relate directly to the coming of Christ, but let me suggest a simple practice this year for us to undertake as a church, and that is each day allow the words of John to be our prayer as we begin each day, "May I decrease, so Jesus can increase."

This advent season, let's prepare for the coming of Christ by getting out of the way, so He can shine brightly in us and through us!

Did You Know?



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Fun Fact: According to Asher Fogle and Lizz Schumer of Good Housekeeping, Christmas wreaths are a religious symbol.

"The Christmas wreath first originated as a symbol of Christ. The holly represents the crown of thorns Jesus wore at His crucifixion and the red berries stand for the blood He shed. So, when you see a wreath this holiday, you'll remember the reason for the season."

A Willing Witness

Looking for Peace

with Rev. Dr. Don Edwards, Associate Pastor
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Luke 2:14 states, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace.”*



The centuries have rolled by, and still the world longs for and looks for the peace the angels sang about on that first Christmas morning. Even the land of His birth often seems torn by violence and conflict. “Where is His peace?” you may ask.

I will tell you where it is. It abides in the hearts of all who have trusted in His grace. And in the same proportion that the world has trusted in Christ, it also has peace. Yet our world continues to be torn by wars and unrest. I know of no country that is completely safe or completely at peace.

The greatest war of all, however, is the war between us and God, as we stubbornly rebel against His authority and defiantly seize control of our lives apart from Him. But now the war can be over, as we yield ourselves to Christ as our Lord. Then we have peace – peace with God, peace in our hearts, and peace with each other. Is the war over in your life? Have you found the peace of Christ in your life?

Hope for Today – Lord, I could never do for myself what You have done for me. I now give complete of my life to You. Fill me with Your peace, and let me be an instrument of that peace to a broken and hurting world.

My Christmas prayer for all of us is found in Romans 15:13, “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace.” Amen!

God at Work

Opportunities to Give and Serve

Friday, December 2: At 5:30 p.m. the Youth Gingerbread Party will be held at the church.

Sunday, December 4: There will be a congregational meeting after worship to approve our budget and receive a proposal from the handicap accessibility committee. Please make sure to pick up a copy of the budget and proposal from the back of the church in preparation for this meeting.



Touch-A-Heart gifts are due back on **Sunday, December 18.** Please sign-up for a gift, purchase that

gift, and return it wrapped under our Christmas tree at the front of the church.



Sunday, December 18: Our annual Soup Supper and Caroling! This year, we'll be enjoying soup right after our church service that morning, then we'll be traveling to carol and deliver soup to several of our shut-ins.

Saturday, December 24: At 7:00 p.m., we will hold our traditional service of Carols, Candlelight, and Communion.

Sunday, December 25: At 10:00 a.m., we'll have a very special Christmas Day service to celebrate our Savior's birth through stories and songs. In keeping with some families Christmas Day traditions, kids of all ages (from 1-99) are invited to wear Christmas pajamas or other festive clothes to worship that morning!

Anniversaries & Birthdays

Anniversaries in December

<i>Rob & Roxann Kolbrich</i>	12/08
<i>Camaron & Melissa Sones</i>	12/15

Birthdays in December

<i>Ashlee Mull</i>	12/01
<i>Pauline Johnson</i>	12/03
<i>Melissa Sones</i>	12/03
<i>Rachel Powers</i>	12/04
<i>Millie Schreffler</i>	12/07
<i>Vanessa Mowrey</i>	12/07
<i>Zachery Armstrong</i>	12/08
<i>Lewis Peterman</i>	12/11
<i>Ken Gottschall, Sr.</i>	12/12
<i>Mya Fish</i>	12/13
<i>Jen Rice</i>	12/13
<i>Harvey Geib</i>	12/14
<i>Andy Frontz</i>	12/16
<i>Craig McKibben</i>	12/17
<i>Owen Sones</i>	12/18
<i>Darla Gottschall</i>	12/19
<i>Terri Rice</i>	12/19
<i>Kendyl Bartlow</i>	12/21
<i>Gary Truckenmiller</i>	12/22
<i>Reda Vermilya</i>	12/25
<i>Wayne McPheron</i>	12/27
<i>Naomi Elser</i>	12/28
<i>David Friant</i>	12/28
<i>Nicholas Flick</i>	12/29
<i>Alivia Johnson</i>	12/31



***Don't see your anniversary or birthday?
Please let us know, so we can celebrate with you!***